

Testimony of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

To the General Law Committee

March 5th, 2013

Regarding Bill 6442 **An Act Exempting Certain Distribution Warehouse Employees from Professional Licensing Requirements**

Senator Doyle, Representative Baram, and members of the General Law Committee, my name is Daniel McInerney, I am a Business Development Representative for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). I am a licensed electrical contractor E1-104065 and a licensed assistant building official with the State of Connecticut MCI-2195. I am an inspector member of the International Association of Electrical Inspectors (IAEI); I am also an executive board member for the Connecticut Chapter of the IAEI. From 1992 to 2010 I was an electrical inspector in the Building Department for the City of Bridgeport. I have been in the electrical industry for thirty five years.

I am here tonight to testify in opposition to bill 6442, An Act Exempting Certain Distribution Warehouse Employees from Professional Licensing Requirements. The IBEW represents over six thousand licensed electrical journeymen, journeymen and apprentices statewide, and we pride ourselves on our continuous effort to ensure our workforce is educated and maintains a safe work environment. We have significant concerns about the bill before you, which we feel undermines current safety precautions put in place for good reason.

This proposed legislation is similar to a proposal which came before the committee last session, which we had concerns about as well. However, the language in bill 6442 takes another step in the wrong direction as it specifically states that individuals who perform work "limited to the installation, maintenance, alteration, or repair of...equipment, apparatus or machines to convey products or materials..." would be exempt from licensure as required by the Department of Consumer Protection regulations. The license required to do such work is already a limited license, which means that the training to obtain the license is not as extensive as that of an unlimited journeyman or contractor's license. It is our opinion that it is not unreasonable to require proper and consistent training of persons' who are working to install, maintain, alter, or repair machines used to convey products. These machines can vary in size and style and can be very dangerous and complicated.

The IBEW would like to caution the committee against creating another exemption in the occupational licensing statutes. We feel licenses are important safety measures as they ensure a person has the appropriate training and experience specific to their trade which helps to reduce accidents on the jobsite. It is our opinion that the system breaks down as we create more and more licensure exemptions, and this has a significant impact on safety. We hear about construction related accidents every day, and we do not want to see the number of incidents on the jobsite grow.

We ask that you please keep safety in mind as you review the legislation before you, and we respectfully request that you oppose the requested exemption from licensure. I would be happy to provide more information at the committee's request. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Daniel McInerney

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers